

**Response to the Recommendations of the Air Quality Task Force (AQTF)
for the Southwest Greater Toronto Area, Oakville-Clarkson**

	Recommendation	Response
1	Develop and implement a new form of governance and an Airshed Management System in the Oakville-Clarkson Airshed to effectively manage cumulative impacts.	<p>Air zone management is a key element of the proposed new national AQMS. The Ministry of the Environment's objective is to arrive at a model for air zone management that could be applied across the province.</p> <p>The Ministry of the Environment will work with the Oakville-Clarkson community to establish a multi-stakeholder working group to lay the foundations needed for a locally-led air zone Committee for the area.</p>
2	Development of supportive and required policies and regulations for the Airshed Management System should be a priority.	The development of air zone management as part of the new AQMS would consider the need for new policies.
3	The province should develop an Inter-Ministry Action Team, consisting of senior staff from the Ministries of the Environment, Transportation, Health and Long-Term Care, Municipal Affairs and Housing, and Energy and Infrastructure to coordinate provincial policy development in order to implement the Air Quality Action Plan.	The Ministry of the Environment has established a multi-ministry Directors committee to serve as an Inter-Ministry Action Team as recommended by the AQTF.
4	All applications for Certificates of Approval for new or modified industrial activities, which will increase emissions within the airshed, must be considered in light of the current capacity of the airshed. This recommendation would also apply to the issuance of a Certificate of Approval for the power plant.	The Ministry of the Environment is committed to developing long-term tools, including science, policies and guidelines to support the consideration of cumulative effects in environmentally significant decision making for air, water and land. The development of the proposed new national AQMS with its air zone management element would provide a framework for place-based air quality challenges.
5	The Ministry of the Environment should set a provincial standard for emissions of primary PM _{2.5} . Other ministries with mandates that affect air quality should also work cooperatively with MOE on development of other air standards.	The Ministry of the Environment is undertaking a review of the need to regulate emissions of fine particulate matter (PM _{2.5}). The review commenced in December, 2010 and is expected to take about 18 months to complete.
6	A review of the state-of-the-science of air pollutants and provincial standards and criteria should be conducted on a regular basis (i.e., every five years).	The new national AQMS would include new ambient air standards (CAAQS) for ozone (O ₃), fine particulate (PM _{2.5}) and new emission standards (BLIERS) for industry. In addition, the Ministry of the Environment continuously monitors the science of air pollution. When new science emerges the ministry prioritizes its review of related standards and criteria. Under the Local Air Quality Regulation (O. Reg. 419/05), Ontario sets air standards to protect local communities near industrial sources of pollution. Ontario also works collaboratively with the federal government and other provinces and territories on an on-going basis to develop consistent national standards for

		key air pollutants.
7	The Ministry of the Environment should release the “Acrolein” report, along with an action plan for dealing with this (and other similar) pollutant(s).	The acrolein report has been released. The report notes that the Ministry of the Environment has relied on U.S. EPA methods for acrolein sampling and that the U.S. EPA recently determined that there is uncertainty associated with the results produced using this method. The ministry will be using the TAGA (mobile air monitoring unit) to undertake other VOC monitoring in 2011. The ministry has also begun using infra-red camera technology to assist in identifying sources of emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs).
8	Air quality improvement targets should address the emissions of PM _{2.5} , NO _x , PM ₁₀ , VOCs and selected Criteria Air Contaminants, but phased in over time, commencing with PM _{2.5} and NO _x .	The new national AQMS would include more stringent ambient air quality standards (CAAQS) and industrial emission standards (BLIERS). The focus is to establish emission standards for smog-causing emissions: nitrogen oxides (NO _x), sulphur dioxide (SO ₂), volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and total particulate matter (TPM). Also see recommendation #5 and #6.
9	Available emissions data should be reported on a more regular basis to the MOE and these data should be posted on the community website.	The federal government is proposing to lead the development of a one-window emission reporting system or systems that would support implementation of the AQMS. This would build upon existing reporting mechanisms or systems. The provinces and territories will collaborate with the federal government to improve reporting.
10	Establish an offset system for the Oakville-Clarkson Airshed. Emission offsets would only be allowed between emitters located within the airshed and embrace the concept of increasingly more restrictive caps to sequentially improve the air quality of the airshed.	Air zone management, part of the new national AQMS, would provide a framework for considering the effects of all emission sources on air quality. At this time, an offset system is not being considered; however, the idea of new policies on emission caps may be revisited over the longer term as the province already has emission caps on NO _x and SO ₂ emissions from the electricity sector and seven other industrial sectors.
11	Funding should be available to industries from both the Industrial Energy Reduction Program (IERP) [now Industrial Energy Efficiency Program (IEEP)] and an Incentive Fund to assist industry with “going beyond compliance.”	The Ontario Power Authority has announced the Industrial Accelerator Program for transmission connected industrial customers (http://www.industrialaccelerator.ca). This program provides attractive financial incentives to speed up investment in electricity saving projects. It is a 5 year, \$646 million initiative. Plans are in place to expand the Industrial Accelerator program in 2011 to distribution connected industrial customers. The new distribution program will be managed by the Local Distribution Companies (LDCs) throughout the province. In addition to funding for capital expenses, it will offer consulting and roving project managers, funded by the program, to help industry make best use of the new capital equipment, improving environmental, energy, and production efficiency.
12	Local industry, working with the Inter-Ministry Action Team, should focus on process change and energy reduction to lower emissions.	See recommendations #3 and #11.
13	Participation in airshed management would be mandated through the Certificate of Approval process.	See recommendation #2.

14	Emissions data posted on the community website should be audited by an independent third party. The audit does not have to precede the posting of this data.	The Ministry of the Environment conducts audits in cases where industry is undertaking air monitoring and will continue this role.
15	All proposals for new or amended Certificates of Approval, including those subsequent to an environmental assessment, will be posted on the community website at the same time as they are posted on the EBR. Ultimately the Ministry's decision would also be posted on the community website.	Ontario is working with many partners to create a future public portal that will make detailed information about environmental approvals applications available to the public via the internet. Information that would be posted on the portal would include Certificates of Approval currently listed on the ministry's eCofA website (http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/environment/en/industry/assessment_and_approvals/environmental_approvals/index.htm) as well as Environmental Compliance Approvals (ECAs) and supporting information about each ECA. In addition, the public will also be able to view registrations made on the ministry's proposed Environmental Activity and Sector Registry.
16	The MOE should develop and operate an ambient air monitoring network for the OCA and the monitoring data should be posted, in real-time, on the community website.	Real-time reporting of ambient air quality from the Ministry of the Environment's Air Quality Index (AQI) monitoring stations is currently posted in real time on the ministry's air quality website at www.airqualityontario.com .
17	The Province should adopt the national Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) and report on cumulative health impacts associated with smog pollutants monitored at suitable locations. The successful adoption of the AQHI requires the leadership of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, support from the Ministry of the Environment and input from the local health departments which are the source of local information, awareness programming and citizen contact.	The Ministry of the Environment is currently collaborating with the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care to explore the feasibility of implementing the Air Quality Health Index across Ontario. Environment Canada is already reporting the AQHI for the GTA (specifically Oakville, Mississauga, Brampton, Burlington, Newmarket, Oshawa, Toronto) and also Ottawa. AQHI reporting for Hamilton is expected to begin in June. The AQHI is available on Environment Canada's website at http://www.ec.gc.ca/cas-aqhi .
18	A new position for a Senior Environmental Officer should be created and funded	Local staff in the Ministry of the Environment's District Office will continue to work with the community on air quality. Ministry policy staff are currently working with the federal government and other provinces and territories to develop a detailed proposal for the national AQMS which includes air zone management.
19	The Ministry of the Environment must develop a strategy to deal effectively with air pollution originating from outside the Oakville-Clarkson Airshed, including the long-range transport of emissions originating outside of Ontario. The development of this strategy should involve Environment Canada, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and relevant U.S. state governments.	Addressing transboundary pollution is a key element of the new national AQMS. Ontario continues to partner with neighbouring provinces and U.S. states and organizations, and participate in the U.S. process to address transboundary air pollution.

20	<p>Outreach, education and moral-suasion can be used to persuade residents to reduce their emissions into the community through such steps as: using high efficiency gas furnaces and high combustion efficiency fireplace inserts; refraining from using gasoline powered gardening equipment at any time, but particularly during smog events; utilizing public transportation when possible; and avoiding the use of barbeques on smog days.</p>	<p>All levels of government and other organizations involved in air quality can undertake outreach and education to help reduce emissions. The Ministry of the Environment has previously published outreach materials on the importance of reducing emissions during smog days. In addition, the ministry's Drive Clean program continues to contribute to public awareness of the impact of vehicles on air quality and the importance of proper vehicle maintenance. The ministry will continue to work with other ministries and municipalities to develop messaging and programs to help reduce emissions from residents.</p>
21	<p>Residential and industrial planning needs to be reviewed to reduce the level of encroachment into industrial zones and transportation routes of all types.</p>	<p>Upper and lower tier municipalities are responsible for land use planning and to ensure that decisions are consistent with provincial policies as stated in the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) under the Planning Act. Policies regarding land use compatibility currently exist in the PPS. The PPS is currently under review and land use compatibility will be assessed as part of this review.</p>
22	<p>Pending the development and issuance of an updated Provincial Policy Statement, every proposal for new land uses in the Oakville-Clarkson Airshed should be examined carefully to ensure that it is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement's provisions for the "orderly development of safe and healthy communities" and the "appropriate location of growth and development."</p>	<p>See recommendation #21.</p>
23	<p>The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Ministry of the Environment should take a position on whether municipalities have the authority to set environmental protection standards in areas of provincial jurisdiction through the by-law process.</p>	<p>Under the Municipal Act, 2001, municipalities have broad powers to pass by-laws concerning the economic, social and environmental well-being of the municipality and the health, safety and well-being of persons as long as they do not conflict with or frustrate a provincial Act, regulation or any other instrument of a legislative nature. The determination of whether there is a conflict with, or frustration of, a provincial Act, regulation or any other instrument of a legislative nature is made by a court and not a ministry.</p>

24	<p>The Ministry of Transportation should work closely with the Oakville-Clarkson Airshed Action Committee (OCAC), when established, in the Preliminary Design Study to ensure transportation-related emissions in the Oakville-Clarkson Airshed (OCA) and its impacts on the communities are at the forefront of decision-making. In addition, the Ontario government should also examine alternative traffic management tools such as rush hour tolling to facilitate the movement of traffic through the OCA.</p>	<p>In November 2010, more than 16 kilometres of High Occupancy Vehicle lanes were opened on the QEW between Trafalgar Road in Oakville and Guelph Line in Burlington. This will ease congestion, and encourage carpooling and greater transit use.</p> <p>To encourage even more carpooling, two existing carpool lots adjacent to the QEW have been enhanced. The Bronte Road interchange carpool lot was relocated and expanded to 142 parking spaces, while the carpool lot at Guelph Line interchange was expanded for a total of 177 parking spaces.</p> <p>The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) is now in the early stages of the preliminary design study of Highway 403 from the QEW to Highway 407 and the QEW from Winston Churchill Boulevard to Trafalgar Road. The study will identify operational and capacity needs and develop improvement plans for Highway 403 and the QEW within the study area. Potential improvements include, adding new lanes and/or High Occupancy Vehicle lanes, rehabilitating/replacing structures, interchange improvements and the addition of the "north to east" and "east to north" freeway to freeway ramps at the Highway 403/QEW interchange. A Public Information Centre (PIC) was held on April 13, 2011 to present the project purpose, the results of existing conditions via field investigations, traffic studies undertaken to date, the proposed undertaking, the potential design alternatives, the evaluation criteria, and the next steps. The PIC provided an opportunity for interested parties, including the Public and Agency Stakeholders to review and comment on the study. The study will include air quality and GHG impact assessments. Study completion is anticipated for late 2012.</p>
25	<p>The Ministry of Transportation should proceed quickly with plans to plant trees and other vegetative barriers to absorb pollutants generated by the vehicles using the major highways in the airshed.</p>	<p>In May 2011, the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) planted trees and shrubs at the following sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QEW and Winston Churchill Blvd – 700 trees and 200 shrubs; • QEW and Ford Drive – 11,175 trees and 1,260 shrubs; • QEW and Royal Windsor Drive – 500 trees. <p>Planting at QEW and Trafalgar Road will be undertaken in fall 2011.</p>
26	<p>Municipalities should pave the shoulders of main roads within the airshed to prevent dust entrainment and tracking of materials into the roadway. Royal Windsor Drive, from Winston Churchill Boulevard to Ford Drive, is an example of such a roadway.</p>	<p>The responsibility for this activity resides with the local municipality.</p>

27	<p>The Ministry of Transportation, municipalities, industry and construction companies should adopt best management practices to develop dedicated street sweeping programs for removing road dust materials so that the re-entrainment of particles by car and truck traffic is lessened.</p>	<p>Businesses, municipalities and the province can all take steps to suppress dust.</p> <p>The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) and its maintenance service providers follow MTO's Maintenance Quality Standards and Maintenance Best Practices for the removal of dust along provincial highways. MTO's construction contracts also include dust mitigation measures. The Ministry of Transportation will continue to develop best practices to reduce re-entrainment of road dust by transportation vehicles as a source of particulate air pollution.</p> <p>Local roads, construction permits and inspections are a municipal responsibility. Municipalities have tools that can be used to help control dust such as by-law making authority. Many municipalities have street sweeping programs and some have been purchasing specialized sweepers that minimize dust.</p>
28	<p>Industrial and construction sites should adopt best management practices to lower fugitive dust emissions. Solutions range from the application of dust suppressants to paving of parking lots and loading areas.</p>	<p>See recommendation #27.</p>
29	<p>Metrolinx should accelerate the timetable for modernizing its fleet of locomotives from diesel to electric technologies. Power for electrification needs to be sourced from emission-free generation facilities. Consideration should be given to making the electrification of the Lakeshore West Line the first priority. (Note: This recommendation could also apply to all rail traffic activities, especially the shunting of freight cars within the airshed).</p>	<p>On January 26, 2011, the Metrolinx Board of Directors approved electrification of the Lakeshore and Georgetown GO Transit rail corridors, with the new Air Rail Link (ARL) as the first phase. The final report is available online at www.gotransit.com/estudy.</p> <p>Ontario has directed Metrolinx to move forward with an environmental assessment to electrify the Air Rail Link.</p> <p>Metrolinx's electrification study concluded that electrification would not materially reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions, since GO produces such a small percentage of the overall emissions in the region.</p>
30	<p>Transit, commuter and local forms of transportation should be improved to encourage utilization of these facilities, including synchronization of buses and GO trains. Items such as "one fare" tickets, right-size buses, structured and safe biking lanes and ample parking availability at all transit venues, are also examples of improvements.</p>	<p>Municipalities, the province and the federal government all have important roles to play in improving our transit systems.</p> <p>The Province, GO Transit and nine municipal transit partners in the GTA, Hamilton and Ottawa have come together to design, develop and implement a seamless provincial regional transit fare card system. The PRESTO Fare Card can be used on Hamilton Street Railway, Burlington Transit, Oakville Transit, Mississauga's MiWay and Brampton Transit, and on the majority of GO Transit's rail network. PRESTO is also currently available at 12 TTC subway stations. York Regional Transit, Durham Region Transit and GO Transit's bus network will implement PRESTO over the summer, and Ottawa's OC Transpo will implement PRESTO in spring of 2012.</p> <p>Since 2003, GO Transit has added over 17,800 new parking spaces.</p> <p>Under the Building Canada Fund (BCF) program, GO Transit will be proceeding with the construction of an Oakville Parking Structure in the near future. The total cost is anticipated to be approximately \$37M, and it is expected to be complete in 2012. The parking structure will result accommodate about 1,300 total spaces, resulting in over 1,100</p>

		<p>net new spaces available for commuters using the Oakville Station.</p> <p>GO Transit has added a third track on the Lakeshore West Corridor, between Port Credit and Oakville and between Burlington and Hamilton. This additional track will help to improve reliability of services in the corridor, and provides operational flexibility to increase levels of service.</p> <p>The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) is updating its cycling policy and is looking at ways to accommodate cycling within the provincial highway network.</p> <p>Through Metrolinx's Bikelinx Program, bicycle-carrying racks have been installed on GO buses across the region. GO stations are being equipped with bike storage facilities during their normal retrofit schedule.</p> <p>MTO has awarded over \$750,000 to 33 municipalities for 34 municipal projects that promote alternative forms of transportation.</p>
31	<p>It is also vital that the Ontario government provides long-term, stable funding assistance for transportation capital improvements and operations. The federal government also has a role in supporting improved transit and other measures aimed at improving the flow of goods along the QEW and Highway 403 while improving air quality.</p>	<p>Since 2003, the Province has invested more than \$10.8B in public transit, including approximately \$4.7B in GO Transit.</p> <p>The Province provides two cents per litre of provincial gas tax revenues to eligible municipalities as a source of sustainable funding for public transit. Since 2004, the Province has provided over \$1.6B in gas tax funding to municipalities.</p> <p>In 2007, the Province announced an \$11.5B MoveOntario 2020 funding commitment which forms the foundation investment for the transit projects identified by the Metrolinx RTP.</p> <p>Additionally, the federal and provincial governments are supporting major rapid transit projects already underway in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toronto York Spadina Subway Extension – Federal: \$697M; Province: \$870M through the Move Ontario Trust. [In addition, the City of Toronto committed \$526M and York Region \$352M] • Mississauga Transitway BRT – Federal: \$83M; Province: \$65M; GO Transit: \$48M • Brampton Züm BRT – Federal: \$95M; Province: \$95M
32	<p>The Ontario government should join its provincial partners and accelerate the adoption of more progressive vehicle emission standards in advance of the implementation of the proposed Passenger Automobile and Light Truck Greenhouse Gas Emission Regulations. The Ontario government should also be at the forefront in championing tougher fuel economy standards for heavy duty trucks.</p>	<p>Ontario supports strong North American standards for vehicles. Final emission standards for passenger vehicles and light duty trucks are harmonized across North America and will achieve 6.634 L/100km by 2016. The new standards are directed at reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.</p> <p>The federal government has just begun consultations for the development of GHG regulations for heavy duty vehicles. Ontario is participating with our provincial colleagues to ensure these tougher standards are harmonized with the U.S.</p>

33	Municipal and commercial fleets of motorized vehicles should be converted to lower emission vehicles as soon as possible.	<p>Many municipalities and businesses are taking steps to green their fleets (including Oakville and Mississauga).</p> <p>The province supports greening of fleets to reduce emissions and encourage adoption of new technologies. The province is committed to reducing fuel consumption and emissions from its fleet. Currently there are over 1,000 hybrid vehicles in the Ontario Public Service (OPS) fleet, which represents approximately 30% of the passenger fleet. The province has committed to acquire approximately 500 plug-in electric vehicles for its fleet by 2020, based on vehicle availability. The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) provided \$5.5 M in grants to support the purchase of 2100 green commercial vehicles; MTO is now monitoring the technology to evaluate its performance and effectiveness in reducing greenhouse gases.</p> <p>The province has set an ambitious vision of 1 in 20 vehicles being electric by 2020. To support this vision the government offers an incentive for the purchase or lease of eligible plug-in electric vehicles of between \$5,000 and \$8,500 depending on the battery size. The government also offers a green licence plate which permits drivers of electric vehicles to drive on high occupancy vehicle lanes (HOV) with a single occupant until 2015. In the future, select GO Transit stations will have public recharging capacity in their public parking lots. In addition, Ontario government-owned lots will have recharging facilities available.</p>
34	All work undertaken in the airshed must be compatible with other government programs that are currently in place or are subsequently developed.	The province agrees with the importance of integrating initiatives. One of the most important aspects of air zone management is to provide the framework for considering air quality as part of all activities and decisions affecting an area.
35	In order to facilitate transparent and timely disclosure of information and data, a community website must be set-up for the posting of real time monitoring data with the relevant activities and outcomes within the airshed.	Real-time reporting of ambient air quality from the Ministry of the Environment's Air Quality Index (AQI) monitoring stations is currently posted on the ministry's air quality website at www.airqualityontario.com .